



The LINK

for Child Care Professionals

Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

Spring/Summer 2004

Calling All Providers

By Steve Rowswell
Data Unit

This copy of the LINK is in your hands because of the 2004 Provider Survey! Early responses indicate that providers want us to go back to mailing out the LINK, rather than posting it online.

The information that you give us in the Provider Survey on rates, hours, staffing, and how your business is doing is used by us in many, many ways. The closing comments that providers made on both the on-line and phone surveys are being shared with the DCCEL's Management Team and other decision-makers in the state. If you haven't already provided your input, please take the time to respond.

This year we've tried to collect information from EVERY licensed provider either by phone or on-line at <http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu/childcare>. The on-line survey has been a great success. Already about 500 providers have responded to the on-line survey and

many commented on how easy it was to complete. Thank you to the 2,760 providers that have already responded!!

All center providers (except those that are part of large multiple site groups) should have received a letter and a phone call from an interviewer at WSU's Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC). If you're a center provider and haven't received a phone call from SESRC, you can contact them at 1-800-803-6424.

About one-third of all family home providers should have received a letter and a phone call from SESRC by now. All other family home providers should have received a letter from Rachael Langen, the DCCEL Director, inviting them to provide information on-line.



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Summer Camp Fun

Seasonal day camps provide positive, fun experiences for children during the long days of summer. This summer, DSHS subsidized children in the Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane areas are able to join in on the fun.

Participating camps receive subsidy payments through contract agreements with DCCEL. Camps offer recreational and educa-

tional activities in outdoor settings for children 5-12 years old. Weekly day camp sessions run June 14 through September 3, 2004.

To learn if a camp is approved for this program, please view the list of approved camps at: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/parents.shtml#SeasDayCamps>.

*Director's Corner***Olympia LINK***By Rachael Langen,
Director of the Division of
Child Care and Early Learning*

Prevent SIDS

Several SIDS deaths have recently occurred in child care facilities. This is devastating to the families involved and to their providers. SIDS remains a mystery to many of us. However, there are things a child care provider can do to help prevent a SIDS death.

These are reflected in the Minimum Licensing Requirements for

centers and family homes. In all situations, infants must be put to sleep on their backs, unless there's a written note in the infant's file authorizing another sleeping position.

The proposed Family Home WAC (388-296-1060) also requires the following:

- Place the baby inside the crib, toddler bed or playpen on a firm mattress with a tight fitting sheet.
- Do not use soft, fluffy bedding, stuffed toys, pillows, crib bumpers and similar items in the crib.

I talked recently with SIDS experts and they offer some additional advice to prevent SIDS.

- No container sleeping in elevated positions (i.e. car seat on a table)
- Eliminate the use of wedges or cushions to prop infants while sleeping

- Reduce overheating of the infant during sleep by using fewer blankets. As an alternative, try an insulated sleeper and one light blanket tucked so that it falls just below the infant's arms.

By following this good advice, we can remain diligent in doing our part to prevent SIDS.



STARS Scholarships

Now is the time to apply for STARS scholarships.

To apply, there is a new, easier-to-use scholarship application that is available on the STARS website. Visit http://stars.dshs.wa.gov/stars_forms.asp to print out a copy of the new application.

The STARS program has announced other changes for the scholarship program:

- Award limits have increased 25%
- Aides and Assistants are now eligible

Take advantage of the money to help with yours STARS training. Apply today!

Licensor Training Efforts

By Leslie Edwards-Hill, Southwest Region Trainer

Statewide Licensor training is underway. The purpose of the training is to move toward statewide consistency in the way licensors and health specialists do their jobs. Response to the new training system has been overwhelmingly positive.

The training system for family child care and center licensors and health specialists began at the DCCEL Fall Conference on October 7th and 8th, 2003.



The first module rolled out was the Ethics module. An average of 94% of DCCEL licensing staff and supervisors have completed these modules.

The next training was on the new Complaint Policy, and 95% of staff completed that training before January 1, 2004. Licensing Investigations training has been completed by 88% of staff, and Interviewing (for complaints) and the CAMIS complaint module will be scheduled soon.

For new licensors and health specialists, we developed a training entitled "Job Basics".

Additional trainings we have delivered include Health Training for child care center licensors, which was taken by 68% of center licensors. Health training for family home licensors is scheduled before June 30, as is fire safety training for family home and center licensors.

Other upcoming trainings include the Licensing Process for homes and centers, Provider Orientation and Evaluating and Assessing Programs and Environments. The Licensing Process trainings will be delivered before June 30, and the others will be delivered after June 30.

The LINK

The Link is a quarterly publication of the Division of Child Care and Early Learning, Economic Services Administration, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), for child care professionals. Send questions, comments, or ideas to the Coordinator, The Link, DSHS/DCCEL, P.O. Box 45480, Olympia, WA 98504-5480.

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Licensors Prompts Community Support for Child Care Facility

Licensors write up requirements for centers and homes based on their visits to facilities and expect those requirements to be followed. They know that it's difficult for some facilities to make these recommendations become a reality. This is a story of how government and the community are working together to help the special children at a Kirkland child care center.

The licensors were asking the center to replace their playground equipment with permanent, sturdy apparatus that was better for the kids than the tiny plastic items they currently have.

However, the BEST High School Child Care Center runs on a shoestring with no money for \$4,000 worth of equipment. How could the center possibly comply? Center Licensors Denise Michaels had some ideas and was instrumental in helping the center turn the need into reality.

Alison Acevedo is the Day Care Supervisor at the center and had been trying to figure out how to purchase

playground equipment. Because of the budget difficulties, district officials told Alison that she'd have to raise the money herself. "I know how to care for children," she said, "but fundraising wasn't supposed to be in my job description. I had no idea how to proceed."

After Licensors Denise Michaels heard that the school district had no money, she began thinking of ways for Alison to get it. "I told her that she should contact non-profit agencies in the area with a playground proposal," Denise said. Denise also assured Alison that the community of Kirkland was a giving community and that the funds would be there. Based on Denise's advice, Alison began assembling a playground proposal after she put her eye on a suitable

playground set in a catalog. With shipping and installation, the total bill would be \$4,410.

The BEST center gets support from the local Kiwanis and the Kirkland Interfaith council every year at Christmas. "I realized that we already had some community support," said Alison. Her proposal was well received. The Kirkland Interfaith Council pledged \$800 to the cause. The Kiwanis pledged \$1500. Other donations from private individuals were made so that only \$850 remained. The school district has agreed to cover the remaining amount and erect a plaque commemorating all the donors. The equipment should be installed some time this summer.

Alison feels that she was really inspired to take this on by her licensors. "Denise is amazing, just phenomenal," Alison said. "She encouraged me to get financial support from the community. Denise even came to a meeting with the school district and acted as my advocate for why the equipment was needed."



BEST High School Parent Sha'Rise Griggs and son Dalyn Bryant pose with Alison.

Reminder of WAC Public Hearings

Don't miss your chance to comment in person on the proposed Family Home Child Care WACs.

Olympia:

Lacey Government Center
Room 104A
1009 College St. SE • Lacey
Thursday, June 3, 2004, 6:30 p.m.

Spokane:

Regional DCCEL Office
Suite 2000
1313 N. Atlantic St. • Spokane
Tuesday, June 8, 2004, 6:30 p.m.

Yakima: (monolingual, Spanish-speaking)

Perry Technical Institute
2011 W. Washington Avenue • Yakima
Tuesday, June 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Measles Outbreak Prompts Immunizations

Mark Kastenbaum, Policy Unit

In April 2004 Seattle-King County Public Health reported confirmed cases of measles in recently adopted children from China. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases in the world and is frequently imported in the U.S.

Measles is highly contagious and is spread easily from person to person through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Thus, all children and any adult who did not have the disease as a child should be vaccinated. The first signs of measles are a fever, runny nose, and cough, which appear 10-12 days after a child is exposed. The rash appears several days later.

If a case of measles occurs in a child care setting the following steps should be taken:

- Immediate notification of your local health department.
- Exclude the ill person from the facility until 5 days after the rash appears.

Notify parents. Any unimmunized children and adults should be immunized or excluded from the center until 2 weeks after the rash appears in the last case of measles in the facility.

Voluntary Early Learning and Development Benchmarks

A New Partnership Project in Washington State

By Sangree Froelicher, Project Director, Head Start-State Collaboration Office

Washington State policymakers and those most interested in the success of young children—their parents, caregivers, teachers and administrators in early childhood and elementary settings, and others—are coming together over the next year to create a description and framework of the skills, knowledge, and approaches to learning that contribute to children's success when they go to kindergarten. This framework will be called The Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks. The creation of the Benchmarks is a partnership project between the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and is sponsored by the Head Start-State Collaboration Office and OSPI. Additional project support is being provided by the Division of Child Care and Early Learning and the Department

of Community, Trade and Economic Development/ECEAP.

Purpose:

These voluntary Benchmarks will help parents, teachers and caregivers (in a variety of early care and education settings) understand reasonable expectations for the young children they care for and teach, and provide strategies and tools on how to support those processes. They are intended to help the parents, teachers and caregivers develop a deeper understanding of what children need to know and be able to do when they enter school that is sensitive to the diverse ways that children grow and learn. And, they will guide parents, caregivers and teachers as they develop activities and research-based curriculum for the

children in their care that will enable them to achieve and sustain

better results for children.

Benefits:

The Benchmarks project holds great potential to improve the learning outcomes for children whether they are at home or enrolled in one of the variety of early care and education settings in

Washington and to help parents and teachers easily access important information about child development and learning. The beneficiaries of this ambitious project will be the young children of Washington State.



For more information about this project, please log onto <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/publications.shtml#reports> for the electronic version of "A Guide to the Formation of Washington State's Early Learning & Development Benchmarks" booklet.

Help Parents Keep Immunization Forms Updated

DCCEL has received concerns that children in care are not properly immunized. We suspect that children are properly immunized, but that the documentation (immunization forms) is missing from many children's records at your facility. Please help parents fill out the immunization form so that the children in your care have the proper records of their immunization.

Link to be Mailed for One Year

The Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter issues for 2004 will be mailed to all childcare providers in addition to the version on the DCCEL website.

We will try this and then poll providers in the November (Fall/Winter) issue about how effective this is.

Questions?

Contact your local Resource & Referral agency to learn about available child care provider training and technical assistance, by phone at 1(800) 446-1114 or visit the statewide website at <http://www.childcarenet.org>.

Contact your Licensor or Licensing Supervisor with questions about the MLRs or with license renewal questions. Visit DCCEL online at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/>



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